

men are rare in every age, and they now seem almost to belong to another period of existence. To some extent it is in the power of many of my readers to remedy this. Lessons in courtesy and, better still, living examples of consideration for others, can be better brought home to children in the Schoolroom than in later life. The students of the House of Education will not forget the friend we have lost, and in memory of his work for them, will no doubt endeavour to be, and teach others to be, men and women of a like kind.

M. L. HODGSON.

SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION.

HOW FAR IS A CHILD'S LOVE OF ANIMALS A SAFEGUARD
AND HOW FAR A DANGER?

II.

Love of animals as a safeguard from the innate cruelty of undisciplined Nature has been considered by two writers. I had hoped to dwell upon the less obvious reverse, and point out what dangers lie therein. Circumstances have prevented the writing of the article planned, so I quote, verbatim, a paragraph, by Lady Violet Greville, in *The Graphic*, which very admirably warns us against some of the perils which await animal-lovers in general:—

“Humanity to animals is the result of civilisation. But what about the excessive worship of animals exhibited by people now-a-days? There is a degree between the brutal cruelty to the dumb creation, indulged in by Catholic nations, and the Latin races especially, and the sickly, unnatural affection many women show for their dogs. I know a lady who will not visit her relations in England because she can't take her dog with her, owing to existing regulations, and others who have given up the enjoyment of villas abroad, rather than leave their pets behind them. To

my remark to a friend who lived alone in a deserted spot in the winter, that I feared she would feel lonely, she answered, ‘How can I? I have my dog and my parrot.’ I am, myself, very fond of animals, and like to have a dog about me; but surely this adoration and foolish craze for animals is erring as much, though in another direction, as the exercise of cruelty. Human beings have, after all, the greatest claim on our affections and sympathies, and while there are starving men and women in the world it cannot be right to expend so much time, money, and affection in pampering our pets. The dog that only eats chicken, the peacock that refuses any meat but liver, the cat that prefers and receives cream, are all so many examples of our selfishness and want of balance. Dogs only take what we give. We have no scope for pure unselfishness in our treatment of them; we keep them for our pleasure; we put up in their case with no temper, weakness, or faults which are the portion of even the best-loved human beings, who need our comprehension and our sympathy.”

A child's love of animals can scarcely fail to be a safeguard in his intercourse with them, provided he is old enough to understand even a very little about them. Watch a small child pulling a dog or cat about, notice the calm and complacent way in which this treatment is borne by the animal in question—so long as this treatment is the outcome of affection. On the other hand, the same treatment actuated by a spirit of bullying would not be tolerated for an instant. The beast knows well enough whether his tormentor means well or otherwise, and has his own way of warning the child that he has had enough. There is nothing which our domestic animals, from the horse and cow to the cat on the hearth, resent so much as fear. They do not understand it, especially from that creature whom they acknowledge as their supreme lord—the human child. His arrogance towards them is natural, his aversion to or fear of them is not. I have seen a small boy catch and lead home a great horse who could have silenced him for ever with a slight nip of his powerful teeth. Love of animals

causes a confident attitude towards them, a firm hand in touching them; fear causes the sudden backward shrinking movements, which they cannot bear.

Animals, too, will stand a great deal of harsh treatment at the hands of a child, which they will not take from a grown-up person. Try if your dog will allow you to put your fingers in his eyes, swing him by his tail, pull his ears, with the same smiling countenance which he would preserve were you, say, six years of age. There is a law for the babe which is not the law for the man.

S. H.

The love of his lowlier brethren by the human animal is, in itself, a thing so admirable, that at first sight it would seem that there could be no danger in letting a child indulge this sentiment freely. It seems to me that danger arises only when, instead of the love of animals, we find substituted—as one frequently does—the exclusive love of one or two.

To consider the question from the first point of view—the love of animals as a safeguard. There are so many good qualities fostered and brought out in a child by the love of animals, that this love acts as a safeguard against the corresponding negative qualities, in accordance with that beneficent law of which we hear of much—the law of habit. In the first place comes unselfishness, for the child must think for the animals, and give time and care to their well-being at all times, even at the cost of some pleasure to himself. Then sympathy is engendered of this love, and with it understanding (in ever-varying degrees)—a reverence for created things; for the more we understand, the more do we find that every creature of God has something in it to be admired. As Stevenson says, "They have an ideal of duty towards which they strive, even as men do."

I think we might all do well to strive to inculcate in children that attitude of mind towards the lower creatures shown by St. Francis of Assisi, who called the birds his little brothers and sisters.

In such a love I see no danger, but it is in the exclusive love of a few that danger lies. A child may be devoted, say

to a pet dog, upon which he lavishes untold care and affection, while towards others of the species, which happen to belong to someone else, he shows not the slightest degree of kindness or interest. As a matter of fact, he frequently entertains a feeling of jealousy towards them, which leads him to treat them at times with positive cruelty. The great danger in a case like this is that exclusiveness, narrowness of sympathy, jealousy, and even vindictiveness are fostered in the child, to the exclusion of the opposite virtues.

It seems to me, therefore, that, while the true love of animals helps to form and bring out many good qualities, the exclusive love of a few tends to foster many bad ones, and is thus a source of great danger.

E. M. E. W.

This extract from a letter also bears instructively upon the subject:—

"The children have a charming couple—gander and goose—named Adam and Eve, and Eve was sitting upon twelve eggs. The children thinking it was natural for a goose to spend some little time upon the water, took her forcibly by the wings every evening (very brave of them, I think), and ran off with her to the pond and flung her in, Adam following and expostulating. There they spent a little time, and then Eve hastened back to her nest, followed closely by the attentive Adam. Whether in consequence of their evening escapades or not I cannot say, but not a single gosling came to light. Even the hens get too much attention, but those have been wise enough to steal their nests and have managed to rear splendid broods. And yet these children fail to see the error of their ways! One of my children's numerous good qualities is a great love of animals!"